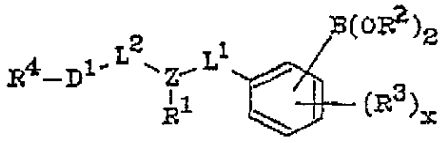
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 32 and 42 as follows:

1-31 CANCELLED

32. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing a biocompatible polymer matrix for immobilizing a compound of the formula



(I)

wherein:

D^1 is a dye selected from the group consisting of fluorescent dyes, luminescent dyes and calorimetric dyes;

R^1, R^3 and R^4 are each independently substituents which alter the electronic properties of the groups to which they are attached or are functional groups which can form covalent linkages to the surrounding polymer matrix;

each R^2 is a member independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen or C_1-C_4 alkyl;

each L^1 and L^2 is a linking group having from zero to four contiguous atoms selected from the group consisting of carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur and phosphorus;

Z is a heteroatom selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur, oxygen and phosphorus; and

x is an integer from zero to four, said method comprising:

admixing the compound of Formula I with a diisocyanate and a hydrophilic polymer, wherein said hydrophilic polymer is a member selected from the group consisting of a hydrophilic polymer diol, a hydrophilic polymer diamine and combinations thereof, wherein said diisocyanate comprises about 50 mol% of the reactants in said admixture to form said biocompatible polymer matrix.

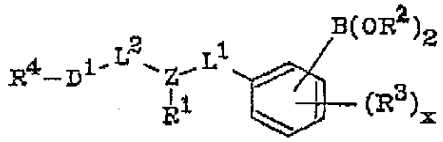
33. (Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 32, wherein said biocompatible polymer matrix further comprises an outer hydrogel coating.

34. (Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 33, wherein said hydrogel coating is made by:

admixing a diisocyanate, a hydrophilic polymer, wherein said hydrophilic polymer is a member selected from the group consisting of a hydrophilic polymer diol, a hydrophilic polymer diamine and combinations thereof, and, optionally, adding a chain extender, wherein said diisocyanate comprises about 50 mol% of the reactants in said admixture to form said biocompatible polymer matrix with a hydrogel coating, said hydrogel having a water pickup of from about 120% to about 400% by weight.

35. (Previously Presented) A method in accordance with claim 32, further comprising admixing a siloxane polymer having amino, hydroxyl or carboxylic acid functional groups at the chain termini.

36. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix comprising a compound of the formula



(I)

wherein:

D^1 is a dye selected from the group consisting of fluorescent dyes, luminescent dyes and colorimetric dyes;

R^1, R^3 and R^4 are each independently substituents which alter the electronic properties of the groups to which they are attached or are functional groups which can form covalent linkages to the surrounding polymer matrix;

each R^2 is a member independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen or C_1-C_4 alkyl;

each L^1 and L^2 is a linking group having from zero to four contiguous atoms selected from the group consisting of carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur and phosphorus;

Z is a heteroatom selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur, oxygen and phosphorus; and x is an integer from zero to four.

37. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 36, further comprising a permeable coating.

38. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 36, further comprising a chain extender.

39. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 36, wherein said compound of Formula I is immobilized by covalent attachment to said matrix.

40. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 36, wherein said polymer matrix is a member of the group selected from a polyurethane polymer, an acrylate polymer, a hydrogel polymer, a silicon-containing polymer and mixtures thereof.

41. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 40, wherein said acrylate polymer is poly-hydroxymethylacrylate (P-HEMA).

42. (Currently Amended) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 37, wherein said permeable coating is a member selected from the group consisting of hydrogel, cellulose, acetate, poly-hydroxymethylacrylate (P-HEMA), nafion, and glutaraldehyde.

43. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 40, wherein said silicone-containing polymer is a siloxane.

44. (Previously Presented) A biocompatible polymer matrix in accordance with claim 36, wherein said polymer matrix is formed by reacting (a) a diisocyanate and (b) a hydrophilic polymer.